Richard Bentley

Poetry and Enlightenment

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Contents

Introduction

What Was a Scholar?

The name of Richard Bentley evokes both loathing and fascination for literary critics today. Students of eighteenth-century literature know Bentley as a repellent character in Jonathan Swift's *Battle of the Books* and Alexander Pope's four-book *Dunciad,* whose loud claims to supremacy as a critic rest on the fact that he despises all great pieces of literature. Students of John Milton know Bentley as a flamboyant but embarrassing predecessor, whose interventionist edition of *Paradise Lost* (1732) has figured as a cautionary example from the eighteenth century through William Empson to the present.[1] The noisome Bentley, however, was no ordinary crank. In fact, he was an eminently well-qualified professional scholar, specializing in the poetry of the ancient world—an extraordinarily successful member of that international, Latin-writing mob of erudite men known in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as the Republic of Letters. He had been rewarded with high institutional rank, as royal librarian and as master of Trinity College, Cambridge. As a student of classical antiquity, indeed, Bentley shone more brightly than any other contemporary. But not content with the acclaim of his fellow scholars alone, Bentley decided from an early age that he would also pursue a reputation in the English polite world at large.

The results were spectacular and, in the case of *Paradise Lost,* lamentable. Through his overweening ambition and his imperious persona, Bentley precipitated the wholesale clash of worlds that led to his demolition by

the English satirists. Specifically, Bentley revealed to his polite readers the doings of the professional scholar, even as he adapted his scholarship to anticipate the needs and the deficiencies of the amateur. The horrified and dumbfounded reactions that greeted him show graphically how separate were the spheres of vernacular reading and of professional humanism in England, even so long after the continental Renaissance. The union between these worlds that Bentley craved—with himself, certainly, as the cynosure of both—was not to be achieved in his lifetime, nor indeed can it quite be said that we have reached it today.

The case of his *Paradise Lost* makes a bracing introduction to Bentley's critical methods; so extreme are its tactics that they resemble a hyperbole or parody of Bentley's own ordinary procedures. Centuries of invective have by no means exhausted this edition's strangeness. In an era when editions of English poems were a new and increasingly prestigious vehicle for displaying a critic's sagacity, Bentley claimed to have detected the traces of egregious textual corruption in Milton's epic, traces that had apparently gone uncomprehended by every other reader since the poem first appeared in 1667. According to Bentley, the blind Milton had unwisely entrusted the task of proofreading to an audacious associate, who changed, removed, and inserted words and passages to suit his own barbarous taste. But Bentley, fortunately, possessed the necessary qualifications for restoring *Paradise Lost* to its originary purity. Ridiculing "the Editor" who had enfarced Milton's poem with "monstrous Faults," Bentley defended his preferred readings in hectoring annotations: Satan lying in the lake of fire, for example, saw not "darkness visible" but "a transpicuous gloom" (1.85); a heroic simile comparing the great hall of Pandemonium to a medieval jousting field was patently not by Milton at all (1.763–766).[2] In a complicated exchange of authority and transgression, Bentley was to make Milton more prestigious by editing his poem, while Milton was to make Bentley prestigious by consenting, as it were, to be edited—yet editing, for Bentley, apparently meant making Milton's poem into something else altogether. The dangerous "Editor" who played the villain in Bentley's textual narrative resembled no one more than Bentley himself.

The egregious *Paradise Lost* came quite late in Bentley's career; he was 70 years old when it was published, and he may or may not have believed all of his own redoubtable claims. Long before this, however, his publications on classical literature had already brought him to the attention of a wide English public, above all his edition of Horace (1712) and his *Dissertation* on the forged Greek letters of Phalaris (2nd ed. 1699). In those cases too, Bentley's career was far from free of incident. At every opportunity he courted controversy and outrage, which both his professional readers and

his polite audiences obligingly supplied. It was Bentley's classical work, in fact, that motivated the marvelous attacks on him by the satirists Pope and Swift. Pope festooned his *Dunciad Variorum* with irrelevant and abstruse footnotes, purporting to be by Bentley, quibbling over minutiae and demanding changes to Pope's text. Bentley himself put in a personal appearance in the poem's fourth book, swathed in academic robes, surrounded by a clutch of old-fashioned Aristotelians, and not a little inebriated. This Bentley delivered fair warning to poets about the nature of his own literary acumen:

> Turn what they will to Verse, their toil is vain:
> Critics like me shall make it Prose again.

Notorious for bold textual revisions, above all in his edition of Horace, Bentley had clearly aroused the ire (and the laughter) of the poet who considered himself the leading critical authority of the time. Even when Bentley was not emending, his scholarly habits continued to fall under censure. Leaving to others any form of polite, useful knowledge of the classical world, he intoned:

> For Attic Phrase in Plato let them seek,
> I poach in Suidas for unlicens'd Greek.
> In ancient Sense if any needs will deal,
> Be sure I give them Fragments, not a Meal. . . .

Not for Pope's Bentley the elegant diction of Plato's Athens: he far preferred to excavate obscure and difficult words from a Byzantine dictionary. And not for Bentley any surviving, complete text when some fragmentary quotation remained to be run to ground. These parts of Pope's attack, at any rate, were indeed often accurate.

That Pope should have cared at all what Bentley did is the mark of Bentley's substantial success in placing scholarship before the polite world. The same can be said of Swift, who similarly subjected Bentley to ridicule in his *Battle of the Books* of 1704. The fearsome battle of Swift's title took place in the Royal Library of England, of which Bentley was curator; it featured Bentley with his friend William Wotton venturing forth under arms to attack all ancient books. Impressively equipped with a flail in one hand and a bucket of manure in the other, the martial Bentley could not restrain himself from upbraiding and insulting the generals of his own side for their timidity and incompetence. Left to his own devices, however, when he found his two archenemies Phalaris and Aesop asleep, he took fright, shrank from

killing them, and contented himself with tiptoeing away with their armor. Swift's satire was called forth, in the first instance, by an ongoing pamphlet war, but the literary depiction of Bentley as vituperative, hapless, and ineffectual was his alone.

By contrast with the irresistible satires, a large question mark hangs over Bentley's actual classical scholarship for most readers today. Time has not always dealt gently with early modern writers of Latin, however elegant or learned; nor is it necessarily easy to enter into the vanished intellectual habits of their omnivorously erudite world. To his contemporaries, however, Bentley was a potent cultural and literary force. That he and his fellow scholars studied classical texts rather than English ones only confirms our impression that they commanded what Pierre Bourdieu would call cultural capital.[3] English poems were, of course, widely read and admired in the years around 1700, yet they were little taught or studied in universities and grammar schools.[4] Critical writing about them, from Dryden to Dennis to Pope, was couched in an Aristotelian and occasionally Longinian idiom centering on the declamatory praise and blame of plots and characters. Methodological discussion, collaboration, and in many cases connected argument were scarce. By contrast, Bentley and his professional peers enjoyed highly elaborated methods and a large body of what we would call secondary literature. Meanwhile, classical texts stood at the center of elite men's education, forming a mark of distinction that adults eagerly displayed by amassing classical libraries and dropping classical quotations in speech and writing. Indeed, English literature took considerable time to catch up, so to speak, with the enviable position of classical texts in Bentley's time. This situation is precisely the reason why Bentley's foray into the field of English poetry was surprising: the key question, in fact, is not how a hopeless pedant like Bentley could believe he had the right to edit *Paradise Lost,* but rather why a celebrated classical scholar like Bentley should have bothered to edit *Paradise Lost.* Meanwhile, although the rhetoric of Pope, Swift, and others has encouraged some writers to depict Bentley as the polar opposite of the genteel and polite English critics of his day, they too participated in the late humanist classical culture that Bentley had mastered as a technical expert. Bentley and his fellow scholars figured as competitors against whom others had to defend their claims to intellectual prestige; Bentley's very familiarity and proximity motivated both their insults and the anxiety that apparently underlay them.

It was not only Bentley's mercurial and overweening style, then, that made him a prominent and notorious figure. It was the way in which he aimed at a totally new kind of convergence between scholarship and polite literary culture, akin to that of Renaissance Italy or seventeenth-century France. By contrast, seventeenth-century England—that is, the world where

Bentley grew up—had been radically inhospitable to scholarship that was capable of attracting the attention of anyone but scholars themselves. Arcane, specialized, and often ecclesiastical in its orientation, the traditional brand of scholarship had sought no wide audience beyond the church and universities and frequently found none. Its practitioners, on the evidence, would have surrendered their degrees rather than be caught working on any text familiar to undergraduates. Bentley, however, refused to confine himself to the decent obscurity of a dead language, both figuratively and quite literally. His constantly changing publications embodied the transition. His career began with a punishing and unfinished project to collect the textual fragments of all Greek poetry. He then turned with increasing confidence to the history of ancient poetry, and he ended with actual textual criticism of poetry, driven by loud claims about his own reason and taste: his editions of Horace and *Paradise Lost* completed Bentley's incursion into the world of polite letters, assailing the textual integrity of famous poems while attacking the presumed ignorance of their readers. His innovation in the setting of England, then, was precisely to obtrude serious classical scholarship under the noses of readers who had never seen anything like it before. If it is hard for us to see Bentley's activity as "literary" by the standards of the twenty-first century, nonetheless he transformed scholarship into a sharp instrument to be deployed specifically on the poems that were most universally known to contemporary readers.

But Bentley turned scholarship toward the world of cultural fashion not only through his material but also through his methods. Indeed, few more perfect examples could be found of that much-discussed creature, the Enlightenment man. Bentley's critical methods impressed by their deep commitment to reason and to law, above all when he strove to designate himself as a specialist in poetry rather than a bestrider of all subjects in the style of the seventeenth century. Whether Bentley was insisting that his original conjectures were the best way of correcting Horace or whether he was elucidating the meter of Terence's verse comedies, Bentley held that reasoned judgment and observation could (and should) take the scholar far beyond the actual evidence before him. At the same time, only a scholar could have aimed to change classical scholarship in this way. Bentley the man of reason emerged, not in spite of traditional erudition, but directly from it. Even the debate that he animated over conjectures and manuscripts, so redolent of the values of the Enlightenment, was actually a product of the sixteenth century; Bentley rescued it from its quiescence so as to create an instant and gripping polemic. Nor did Bentley ever completely lose his old scholarly habits. It was his footnotes, authorities, and argumentative justifications that appeared truly alien to his nonspecialist readers, perhaps even more so than his peremptory judgments and pronouncements of taste. Meanwhile,

Bentley courted the ire of his fellow scholars, at home and abroad, by both his swashbuckling treatment of his texts and his intemperate treatment of his opponents.

Although Bentley cultivated an image of extreme singularity, in one respect his career was utterly traditional: he was a churchman, working in his youth for a future bishop and later tyrannizing over Trinity College, Cambridge, of which he became master when he was 38. By one standard, Bentley's life as an establishment man might appear as yet another hopeless mark against him, even to those who gladly inhabit universities today. In his time, of course, we associate the discussion of poetry with urbane wits inhabiting London coffeehouses, or with the energetic pamphlet wars generated in theatrical circles. Bentley, however, was committed to moving his work out of the college and into the drawing room, even at the same time as he made genuine scholarly contributions on an international scale. The university, for him, was a base of operations from which to invade the polite world, not a haven for reclusive and arcane work. Nor should we forget how broad were the intellectual privileges of a churchman during the eighteenth century, from the Shakespeare critic William Warburton to the satirist Jonathan Swift to the dizzyingly successful Laurence Sterne, author of *Tristram Shandy*. Bentley, then, took an active part in making the church and universities themselves more hospitable to secular and purely literary study, prefiguring the rise in the later eighteenth century of literary dons such as Richard Porson and Thomas Gray. At the same time, Bentley presents himself as a close ancestor for the field of literary criticism today. For if universities and libraries are sites for innovation in the present, we should recognize the large and durable impact of those same institutional settings on the past. The celebrated eighteenth-century coffeehouse added a new location to intellectual culture but was far from erasing the old ones.

In another respect, too, Bentley is responsible for shaping what we regard as English literature today. His notorious work demonstrably stood as a fixed star in the rapidly developing universe of English literary criticism, a point of reference for others to approach or avoid in their navigations. Inspired by Joseph Levine's eloquent account of Bentley as a historical scholar, literary critics like Jonathan Kramnick, Marcus Walsh, and Simon Jarvis have positioned Bentley at the origin of two interdependent accomplishments of the eighteenth century: the consolidation of an English poetic canon, and the rise of the literary critic whose work and identity depended on his mastery of that canon.[5] Insofar as these developments still reverberate in professional criticism in our century—in the implacable continuities of curricular practice, if not always in theory—it would appear, however alarmingly, that we are Bentley's descendants. To inquire about Bentley's career, then, is to initiate a nearly violent dialectic between his alienness and his family resemblance to us.

Many discrete questions might be asked of Bentley's story. This book emphasizes the continuous, almost vertiginous changes in scholarly approach that marked each one of Bentley's successive publications. As a result, no chapter can be totally understood without consideration of the whole. However, it is also easily possible to read groups of chapters on their own. Chapters 1 and 2 give a general account of English scholarship inside and outside the church during the Restoration, a period about which we still know far too little. Those interested in a case study of an early modern scholar in the process of learning his trade might see Chapters 3 and 4. The history of textual criticism is the emphasis of Chapters 5 and 6. Finally, readers who especially want to understand Bentley's edition of *Paradise Lost* are urged to read not only Chapter 8, which deals with that edition, but also Chapter 5, on his edition of Horace. For I contend that the *Paradise Lost* represented yet another bold experiment for Bentley, making it aberrant not only in English criticism of the time but also by the standard of Bentley's own earlier practice.

No well-executed history since the nineteenth century has attempted to address all of Bentley's major works. Conversely, no one could contemplate an intellectual study of Bentley without the foundation of the great 1830 biography by J. H. Monk. Bentley deserves a book of his own, not only because much remains unsaid but also because he affords us a superbly useful way of surveying the intellectual world of his time. What was the classical scholarship of the period like—which is as much as to say, how was the master discipline of the humanities conducted? How did a scholar become celebrated in this community, or how might he be branded as a nuisance and a bully? How was it that so much scholarship and literary activity took place in the English church and universities, locales that have often been regarded as less than vibrant? Above all, how could a specifically literary form of classical scholarship arise from the apparently rocky soil of seventeenth-century England? Most fundamentally, how did the miscellaneous and omnivorous learning of the Renaissance and the seventeenth century turn into the sharply defined enterprise of literary criticism? To ask any of these questions is to be drawn ineluctably to Bentley.

Chapter 1, "Before Bentley: Restoration Cambridge," investigates the English scholars of the generation before Bentley's, especially Thomas Stanley, John Pearson, and Thomas Gale. In these circles, Hellenistic Greek

was the favored area of study, and little-known and difficult texts were prized. With the exception of Stanley's edition of Aeschylus's tragedies, these scholars were more interested in a broad *historia litteraria,* or cultural history of antiquity, than in studying poetry directly. Their pronounced preference for a novel fragment over a well-known whole, and for communicating with their fellow specialists rather than a broad public, would also define Bentley's early works—and, it might be argued to some extent, his later ones as well.

Chapter 2, "London in the 1680s: Bentley Begins," looks at the less intellectually serious but highly energetic milieu in which Bentley spent his twenties, in the household of Edward Stillingfleet, then Dean of St. Paul's. Just as for his time as an undergraduate in Cambridge, we know essentially nothing of his activities. But the deeply polemical atmosphere of the church, and its zeal for publication, make it clear enough where Bentley acquired his taste for pamphlet warfare and for concerted waves of publication by many authors. At the same time, living in the center of London's book district, Bentley learned of scholars whose publications were in no way ecclesiastical—above all Isaac Vossius, the rather louche Dutch émigré who could boast a direct intellectual descent from Joseph Scaliger.

In Chapter 3, "Bentley in Oxford: The New and the Strange," Bentley himself irrupts onto the scene with his first major publication, the *Letter to Mill* of 1691; he was nearly 30. An idiosyncratic and highly selective commentary on a Byzantine world chronicle printed at Oxford, this short treatise loudly declared Bentley's sole interest in ancient poetry, preferably lost. Selecting short passages that dealt with the ancient tragedy, Bentley dealt high-handedly with both his primary source and any other matter that could conceivably be considered relevant, including the opinions of his early modern predecessors. Bentley's approach formed part of a new movement in Oxford to publish on classical and literary subjects, but his abrasive, confident, and textually interventionist style was his alone.

With Chapter 4, "Into the Drawing Room: The Public Intellectual," we encounter Bentley's first attempt to place the fruits of scholarship before a polite English audience. Composed, very unconventionally, in the English vernacular, his *Dissertation on the Epistles of Phalaris* debunked the authenticity of ancient Greek letters attributed to the archaic tyrant Phalaris, thus contributing to an ongoing pamphlet war. While the first edition of 1697 presented a plausible case in a concise and elegant way, when Bentley encountered the pressure of a hostile reply he issued a monstrously expanded second edition in 1699, full of precisely the kind of philological digression and detail likely to repel readers for whom scholarship in general was alien. At the same time, he developed a novel and interesting

argument about the history of the Greek tragedy, showing his new capacity to discuss literary history in a way that went beyond the fragment and the emendation.

Chapter 5, "Rewriting Horace: The Force of Reason and the Force of Habit," explores Bentley's best-known work dealing with poetry. It was in this edition (1712) that he delivered his most provocative pronouncements about the superiority of reasoned conjecture over the consultation of manuscripts for correcting a text, and about the presumed ignorance of his audience to grasp that the text was wrong in the first place. Many spectacular and obdurate conjectures backed up Bentley's contention; they were accompanied, however, with masses of "documentation" in the shape of passages that Bentley claimed were parallel, leaving an impression more of raw accumulative scholarship than of elegant deduction. Contemporaries at home and abroad perceived the Horace as important and deeply irritating in equal measure.

Chapter 6, "The Measure of All Things: *Vi commodavi,*" considers an edition that was possibly even more successful than Bentley's Horace yet far less famous. His Terence (1726) revived and resolved centuries-old debates over the proper way to understand the meters of the Latin comedy. Not only was a genuine problem in poetic form at hand. For Bentley, an expertise in meter had always been a crucial corollary of his claims to literary taste. Drawing on an idea of Isaac Vossius's, Bentley introduced the term "rhythm" as an alternative to "meter," associating this change with the claim that the Old Comedy had been performed to the music of flutes throughout. In treating meter as the criterion for emendation, Bentley implicitly made a much more plausible appeal to conjecture and law than in his Horace. Bentley's other important metrical intervention came when, in an unpublished project, he inserted the lost letter digamma in the Homeric poems to regularize the meter of hundreds of lines.

In Chapter 7, "Bentley's New Testament: The Return of the Repressed," we see Bentley attempting to fulfill his destiny as a churchman also renowned for textual scholarship. While angling for the Regius chair of theology at Cambridge, which he captured in 1716, he announced that he would prepare an edition of the New Testament, whose textual probity he had already eloquently defended in the course of a recent pamphlet war. But Bentley never hit on any ruling principle or method for this planned edition. Beyond a few startling and theologically pregnant conjectures recorded in an early hand, the project consisted simply of the accumulation of manuscript readings, largely executed by Bentley's nephew and assistant. What could have become a scholarly contribution of universal interest was thus left unfinished and inchoate, perhaps precisely because Bentley's

signature methods of emendation would have been deeply inappropriate on his own account.

Chapter 8, "Interlopers and Interpolators: Manilius and *Paradise Lost*," shows us the second of Bentley's great and ambitious failures, his textual edition of Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1732). Claiming that the blind Milton's poem had been corrupted in several stages, above all by a malicious proofreader, Bentley proposed to excise and correct what he regarded as the interpolator's unmistakable and tasteless traces. The idea of an interpolator in itself was not illegitimate: it figured in Bentley's edition of the Roman astrologer Manilius (1739) and in many earlier discussions of classical literature. In the case of Milton, the story of the interpolator provided Bentley, very simply, with a good reason why a textual edition based on conjecture should be attempted at all—a reason never well explained by the contemporary editors of Shakespeare to whom the *Paradise Lost* was a reply. If the vogue for Shakespeare editing owed much to the example of Bentley's Horace, he now showed, fearsomely, what a principled and internally consistent edition could actually look like. His final bid to win the attention of a polite, vernacular audience thus became his most bizarre and his most widely read work.

In the end, where should we place Bentley in the history of literary criticism in England? Certainly, he is pleasingly distinct from the Aristotelian or "neoclassical" critics we have been taught to view as the dominant group in his time. Rarely concerned with plot or character and never concerned with "unity," Bentley also spectacularly refused to participate in the cult of the author and the fulsome praise that pervaded contemporary comments on poetry. To take another eighteenth-century habit, Bentley did not pause to show his reader "beauties," those notable, quotable passages that other critics felt obliged to point out again and again. What Bentley pointed out, by contrast, were egregious faults: every question of interpretation or aesthetics was transformed in his hands into a question of textual correctness, or rather wrongness. His mode of reading and argument must be called literary simply because Bentley concerned himself almost exclusively with poetry; nonetheless, they severely challenge our preconceptions of what the "literary" might be in his or any other period. For the limitations of his Aristotelian contemporaries, then, Bentley substituted substantial limitations of his own.

As to Bentley's own techniques, two were especially distinctive, both for his contemporaries and by the standards of the present. The first we might call the textual reduction. For example, Bentley's contribution to the Battle of the Books resolutely avoided the philosophical question of ancients

versus moderns and concentrated purely on the question of whether the letters of Phalaris were authentic. In his editions of poetry, similarly, Bentley was capable of turning any interpretive question into a problem about the correct reading of the text. In turn, Bentley had a fairly finite repertoire of methods for dealing with texts—quotation, compilation, comparison, and not rarely correction—with the result that virtually any topic could be first textualized, then adjudicated by bracing and summary means. I will suggest, for example, that Bentley addressed current theological controversies in this way in his unfinished edition of the New Testament. Second, Bentley was seemingly incapable of writing in any mode but the competitive and polemical. In his scholarly works, his enemy might be a humanist predecessor, a misguided contemporary, or Milton's fictive "Editor"; Bentley's theological writings too were uniformly embattled, excoriating atheists, Roman Catholics, and "free-thinkers." These fundamental habits persisted throughout Bentley's intellectual metamorphoses, and they account for much of the distinctly strange impression that his writings leave.

At the same time, Bentley's mode of reading can appear as a plausible ancestor for literary critics today, in part precisely because we no longer engage primarily in the evaluative language of praise and blame. Like the closest of close readers, Bentley could detect vast amounts and vast questions in a single word; like theorists of the death of the author, Bentley explicitly acknowledged the primacy of his own judgment when he encountered a poem. In the eighteenth century, his reliance on linguistic parallels and analogy for his emendations made clear the need for English reference works, like Samuel Johnson's historical dictionary, that could guide the critic in re-creating a poet's linguistic world. But Bentley's real legacy lies with the definition or the idea of a classic text, whether in the ancient languages or in English. Whether he was correcting a poem's meter or discarding an entire text as a forgery, Bentley assumed that he himself and his entirely real expertise had to serve as the final judge. If this sounds like an Enlightenment doctrine, it also carries a tinge of the postmodern. Indeed, Bentley serves as a particularly awesome test case of the proposition that to become and remain canonical, a poem has to change and be changed over time. What "pleases ten times," to paraphrase Horace, is very far from always pleasing in the same way—or, in Bentley's case, from pleasing at all. If Bentley inspired and troubled textual editors for generations after his death, it was because the poetic canon, in his practice, was both taken for granted and deeply subject to question. Bentley deliberately treated the poetry of the past as a reader in the present, content to attack it precisely because he assumed that it could withstand his assaults and endure.

Notes

Abbreviations

BL	British Library
Bodl.	Bodleian Library
MS	Manuscript
MSS	Manuscripts
ODNB	*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* ed. H. C. G. Matthew and B. Harrison, 60 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004)
TCC	Trinity College, Cambridge
UL	University Library

Introduction

1. See especially William Empson, "Milton and Bentley: The Pastoral of the Innocence of Man and Nature," in *Milton: A Collection of Critical Essays,* ed. Louis L. Martz (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1966), 19–39 (a revised version of the essay appears in Empson's *Some Versions of Pastoral* [London: Chatto & Windus, 1935]); and William Kolbrener, *Milton's Warring Angels: A Study of Critical Engagements* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).
2. "Editor": *Milton's Paradise Lost: A New Edition, by Richard Bentley, D.D.* (London, 1732), preface, sig. a3r° (and in textual notes throughout); "monstrous Faults": preface, sig. a2r°.
3. See, e.g., Pierre Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production,* ed. R. Johnson (Cambridge: Polity, 1993).

4. An exception was the chair of poetry in Oxford, whose incumbents beginning with Joseph Trapp in the early eighteenth century lectured on English as well as classical poetry: see Trapp's *Praelectiones poeticae,* 3 vols. (London, 1711–1719). For anecdotal evidence about the reading of Spenser in eighteenth-century grammar schools, see Richard Frushell, *Edmund Spenser in the Early Eighteenth Century* (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1999).
5. See Jonathan Brody Kramnick, *Making the English Canon: Print-Capitalism and the Cultural Past, 1700–1770* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Marcus Walsh, *Shakespeare, Milton, and Eighteenth-Century Literary Editing: The Beginnings of Interpretative Scholarship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Simon Jarvis, *Scholars and Gentlemen: Shakespearian Textual Criticism and Representations of Scholarly Labour, 1725–1765* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995); and Joseph Levine, *The Battle of the Books: History and Literature in the Augustan Age* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991).

1. Before Bentley

1. In Bentley's *Correspondence,* ed. John and Christopher Wordsworth, 2 vols. (London: J. Murray, 1842; repr., 1 vol., Hildesheim: Olms, 1977), the earliest letter dates from 14 May 1689 (William Wotton to Bentley). On 4 July 1689, James Stillingfleet matriculated at Wadham College, Oxford, accompanied by Bentley as his tutor. J. Foster, *Alumni Oxonienses 1500–1714,* 4 vols. (Oxford: Parker and Co., 1891–1892), 4:1424.
2. Marika Keblusek, *Boeken in de Hofstad: Haagse Boekcultuur in de Gouden Eeuw* (Hilversum: Verloren, 1997), and "The Exile Experience: Royalist and Anglican Book Culture in the Low Countries (1640–60)," in *The Bookshop of the World: The Role of the Low Countries in the Book-Trade 1473–1941,* ed. L. Hellinga et al. ('t Goy-Houten: Hes & De Graaf, 2001), 151–158.
3. John Spurr, *The Restoration Church of England, 1646–1689* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1991), 316–317.
4. John Pearson, *Vindiciae epistolarum S. Ignatii* (Cambridge, 1672). Discussion is below.
5. Silvestros Syropoulos, *Vera historia unionis non verae,* ed. Robert Creighton (The Hague, 1660). On the origins of this edition—Creighton printed it with the help of Isaac Vossius, who had removed the Syropoulos manuscript from the library of Queen Christina of Sweden—see Keblusek, "The Exile Experience," 155, and Vitalien Laurent, ed., *Les "Mémoires" du Grand Ecclésiarque de l'Église de Constantinople Sylvestre Syropoulos sur le concile de Florence (1438–39)* (Rome: Pontificium Institutum Orientalium Studiorum, 1971), 53–55.
6. Jean-Louis Quantin, *The Church of England and Christian Antiquity: The Construction of a Confessional Identity in the 17th Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 312–395.
7. The classic argument is that of A. Momigliano, "Ancient History and the Antiquarian," in Momigliano's *Contributo alla storia degli studi classici* (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e letteratura, 1955), 67–106.

8. Henri de Valois, *Polybii, Diodori Siculi, Nicolai Damasceni, Dionysii Halicar. . . . excerpta ex Collectaneis Constantini Augusti Porphyrogenetae* (Paris, 1634); Pomponius Mela, *De situ orbis,* ed. Isaac Vossius (The Hague, 1658).
9. Hierocles, *Commentarius in aurea Pythagoreorum carmina* (London, 1654) and *De providentia & fato* (London, 1655), both ed. John Pearson. Pearson dated his author, the Neoplatonist Hierocles of Alexandria, to the early fourth century, identifying him with the Sossianus Hierocles to whom Eusebius of Caesarea replied in *Against Hierocles.* This identification appears to have been conventional; it was also made, e.g., by Jean Curtier, whose preface to Hierocles (1583) Pearson reprinted.
10. *Opuscula mythologica, ethica, et physica,* ed. Thomas Gale (Cambridge, 1671); *Historiae poeticae scriptores antiqui,* ed. Gale (Paris, 1675); *Iamblichi . . . De mysteriis liber* (Oxford, 1678).
11. Eusebius, *Ecclesiastica historica,* ed. Henri de Valois (Paris, 1659), BL shelfmark Eve.b.56.
12. Joseph Juste Scaliger, *Thesaurus temporum* (Leiden, 1606) [expanded posthumous edition, Amsterdam, 1658]. For discussion, see Anthony Grafton, *Joseph Scaliger: A Study in the History of Classical Scholarship,* vol. 2: *Historical Chronology* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993).
13. Thomas Stanley, *The History of Philosophy,* 3 vols. (London, 1655–1660), and *The History of Chaldaick Philosophy* (London, 1662).
14. By far the best discussion of the *History of Philosophy* is in Luciano Malusa, "Le prime storie generali della filosofia in Inghilterra e nei Paesi Bassi," in *Storia delle storie generali della filosofia,* ed. Giovanni Santinello, 5 vols. in 7 (Brescia: La Scuola and Padua: Antenore, 1979–2004), 1:176–215; there is an English translation, *Models of the History of Philosophy,* vol. 1: *From Its Origins in the Renaissance to the "Historia Philosophica,"* ed. Santinello, C. W. T. Blackwell, and Philip Weller (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1993).
15. See also Stanley's preface in vol. 1, sig. a1 v°: "The onely Author in this kind [i.e., the history of philosophy] for the more antient philosophers is *Diogenes Laertius,* for the later *Eunapius.* And to make the misfortune the greater, that which *Laertius* gives us is so far short of what he might have done, that there is much more to be found of the same persons dispersed amongst other Authors, which I have here collected and digested, with what diligence I could."
16. See Grafton, *Joseph Scaliger,* vol. 2: *Historical Chronology,* esp. 501–743.
17. Stanley, *History of Philosophy,* at the end of vol. 1, sigg. Xxx 2r°–Zzz 1v° ("A Cronologie"), and at the end of vol. 3, sigg. Ooooo 2r°–Rrrrr 1v° ("Chronological Table").
18. See John Marsham, *Chronicus canon* (London, 1672).
19. The enterprise was plagued by problems, however, some of which were not directly Stanley's fault. In the "Cronologie" of volume 1, the *Aera Philosophica* (A.P.) ran only to year 372, due to a set of printing mistakes (Stanley, living in Hertfordshire, apparently trusted someone else to do his proofreading in London); the most serious of these errors resulted in a loss of eighty years, when the series of Olympiads leaped from Ol.CXLI (i.e., 141) to Ol.CLXII (i.e., 162) while the series of years A.P. continued without a break.